

The Advisor

The Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq's Official Weekly Command Information Reporter - January 29, 2005

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Iraqi Security Forces Protect Iraqi Elections
Iraqi Air Force Monitors Elections
NATO Delivers Weapons and Ammo

MNSTC-I

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Cover Photo:

Iraqi police cadets attending police training in Jordan review a list of candidates as they prepare to vote.

Casey speaks of improvements in Iraqi forces

*By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service*

BAGHDAD, Iraq - U.S. Army Gen. George Casey reminded reporters at a press roundtable today just how far Iraqi security forces have come in a relatively short time.

"When Prime Minister (Ayad) Allawi took office June 28, he had one deployable battalion," said the commander of Multinational Force Iraq. "Today, he has 40 battalions."

What's more, Casey said, the units "are in the fight." An Iraqi division with two brigades is operating in Mosul. Another division with two brigades is working in Fallujah. "You have other Iraqi army forces operating in Samarra and north Babil," he said. "They are in the fight. We calculate that we have about 130,000 Iraqi security forces that are trained and equipped today."

Iraqi security forces are comprised of local police, special police, border police and the Iraqi army. In the Iraqi military, there are commando units and special forces in the army. Iraq also has a small air force and a small navy. Casey said the forces have a broad range of capabilities, but their abilities vary widely.

"The weak service is the local police," he said. "That's what you saw collapse in Mosul. You saw about 4,000 police walk off the job when threatened."

But, even with the police, there has been progress over the past seven months.

Still, even with all this improvement, the Iraqi security forces are not capable of taking over the counterinsurgency campaign. Casey said Iraqi leaders understand this, but "there is a willingness and desire to ultimately take it over."

The Coalition and Iraqi leaders are trying to accelerate the training and equipping process. Right now, coalition forces are leading the counterinsurgency effort with Iraqi forces in support. "What the Iraqis want to do in the next year is reverse that," Casey said. "We think we can do that."

"We're an outside force, and the Iraqis in some parts of the country see us as an occupation," he continued. "We need to get the Iraqis in front."

The Coalition is developing plans to place more advisory teams with Iraqi security forces. "There are assistance support teams with Iraqi units now, but they don't have the equipment they need to employ coalition effects -- to get intelligence from us, to get (medical-evacuation support) from us, to get air support and those kinds of things," Casey said.

Coalition forces must also build brigade and division headquarters necessary for the Iraqis to operate independently. By and large, Casey said, building the Iraqi forces is on track. There are problems with the police, but overall the security forces are improving.

In the long term, more capable Iraqi security forces will have an effect on the number of U.S. troops in Iraq. "As Iraqi forces gain capability, they will take over areas of the country by themselves," Casey said. Conditions on the ground, of course, will dictate the decision, he added.

"We want to leave the Iraqi security forces in a position that they can sustain the success we've had," he said. "It's not the 'get-out-of-Dodge' plan, it's to sustain them over the long run."

NATO supplies Iraqi police with weapons, ammo

U.S. Army Maj. Cynthia Teramae

Public Information NATO Training Mission - Iraq

BAGHDAD, Iraq - Three shipments of donated arms and equipment destined for Iraq to support the security effort surrounding the nation's first independent elections in 50 years arrived this week from Denmark and Romania.

The donations came just in time to be placed into the hands of Iraq's armed forces and police force prior to Iraq's elections.

Denmark's shipment was the first of several equipment donations from NATO nations scheduled to arrive in Iraq. The shipment provided more than 100 9mm pistols and also included magazines, ammunition, holsters, and cleaning kits. This shipment was provided to the Iraqi armed forces 1st Mechanized Brigade in Taji.

Two additional shipments arrived from Romania, including thousands of AK-47 assault rifles, hundreds of RPK light machine guns, sniper rifles, RPG-7 grenade launchers, and thousands of rounds of ammunition. The shipment from Romania is destined for the Iraqi police.

"The equipment is in outstanding condition and exceptionally well prepared," said British Army Lt. Col. Simon Wilson who works with the Civilian Police Assistance Training Team of the Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq. "This shipment from Romania will go directly to the Iraqi police to help provide security for the upcoming elections."

The shipment of arms and equipment was a coordinated effort on behalf of the donating nations, NATO, and MNSTC-I.

The NATO Training Mission - Iraq, or NTM-I, is providing training and advice to middle to senior-level leaders of Iraq's security forces, as well as the coordination of equipment.

As part of the NTM-I mission, Supreme Allied Command - Transformation, based in Norfolk, Va., established the NATO training and equipment coordination group in Brussels, Belgium to facilitate NATO Alliance, Partnership for Peace, and other national donations of military equipment and training to the Iraqi security forces.



Thousands of weapons with accompanying ammunition await inspection on the tarmac at Baghdad International Airport. The arms and equipment were donated from the Government of Romania to support Iraqi security efforts for their upcoming elections. Photo courtesy of U.S. Army Maj. Cynthia Teramae Public Information NATO Training Mission - Iraq

The in-country coordination arm is the NTM-I Training, equipment and synchronization cell, which addresses the Iraqi Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior requirements by coordinating the delivery of NATO nation offers of equipment that meets Iraqi requirements.

Other nations have offered training and equipment assistance, which continues to be coordinated by NATO.

British Army Lt. Col. Simon Wilson, who works with the Civilian Police Assistance Training Team of the Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq, inspects a shipment of arms and equipment from Romania. The Romanian government donated thousands of arms and ammunition rounds which were handed over to the Iraqi police forces to support the security efforts for Iraq's upcoming elections. Photo courtesy of U.S. Army Maj. Cynthia Teramae Public Information NATO Training Mission - Iraq



Iraqi military and police operations continue

Iraqi forces find weapons in Fallujah

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Iraqi soldiers from three battalions of the 7th Brigade, working with the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force near Fallujah completed stability operation patrols and found weapons, mortar rounds and machine guns Jan. 21.

The 16th Battalion conducted six stability operation patrols, three listening and observation patrols, four civilian sensing patrols and acting on a tip found nine 60mm rounds and 200 machine gun rounds.

Soldiers from the 17th Battalion conducted five daylight and one night patrol, finding 17 82mm mortar rounds and two 57mm rockets in a vacant lot.

The 18th Battalion conducted six patrols and found two heavy machine guns and small amounts of ammunition.

Commandos capture two suspects

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Ministry of Interior commandos raided targets and captured two suspects in Muhalla Jan. 23.

The commandos raided six buildings on this mission.

Forces capture weapons

BAGHDAD, Iraq – A joint force of Iraqi and Coalition forces conducted a raid in Hayy Al Kharama to detain suspects and U.S. materiel in early January.

Soldiers from task forces Pioneer, Viper and Raptor used intelligence reports and helicopters to observe insurgent activity in multiple target areas.

The soldiers captured 25 suspects and confiscated 12 AK-47s.

Suspects and weapons captured in Babil

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Iraqi police officers in Babil province completed sweeps and captured suspected terrorists, machine guns and mortar rounds in recent days.

Officers captured 32 suspected insurgents, and confiscated 80 AK-47 machine guns, 60 mortar rounds and other small weapons during continuous operations.

The police force in Babil is one of the more effective forces in Iraq and is led by Gen. Qais (full name withheld for security reasons). As the provincial police chief, Gen. Qais is responsible for the Iraqi regular and specialized police forces

in Babil, including the volatile North Babil area.

He is in charge of several thousand police officers dispersed in seven districts and more than 30 substations, and hundreds of specialized police officers, and, more recently, the training of 600 Ministry of Defense forces to backfill regular army units fighting in Fallujah.

Insurgents killed, captured in Mosul

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Soldiers from the Iraqi army's 1st Division, 1st Battalion, killed one insurgent and captured another in Mosul Jan. 21.

The soldiers received mortar fire and observed insurgents firing a mortar from approximately 500 meters away. The Iraqi army soldiers engaged the enemy with direct fire. They found one abandoned 82mm mortar tube.

While searching a house in the vicinity, Iraqi soldiers engaged the enemy, killed one insurgent and captured another who was using a cell phone to provide positions for attacks. A search of a nearby school yielded one sniper rifle.

155mm round found in Fallujah

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Iraqi soldiers from three battalions of the 7th Brigade, working with the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force near Fallujah completed stability operation patrols and found a 155mm round Jan. 23.

The 16th, 17th, and 18th Battalions working with the 1st MEF in Fallujah conducted 15 daylight stability operation patrols, three listening and observation patrols and found one 155mm round, a rocket propelled grenade launcher and one round.

U.S. officials say that the 155mm round could have been used as an improvised explosive device.

Iraqi border patrol deploy to Al Walid

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Additional Special Border Force officers deployed to Al Walid in the Al Anbar province Jan. 24 for border security and insurgent interdiction.

The Special Border Force will patrol the Syrian border to interdict foreign fighters and terrorists attempting to cross into Iraq.

The additional officers will allow the SBF to control more area and additional

forts along the border.

U.S. military officials state that the border officers are a part of the Department of Border Enforcement, a department of the Ministry of Interior.

Weapons discovered in Fallujah

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Iraqi soldiers from three battalions of the 7th Brigade, working with the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force near Fallujah completed stability operation patrols and found an improvised explosive device and mortar rounds Jan. 25.

The 16th, 17th, and 18th Battalions working with the 1st MEF in Fallujah conducted 11 daylight stability operation patrols, one night patrol, three listening and observation patrols and found one IED near the base entrance, one 82mm round, one hand grenade and 60 mm rounds.

Officials say detection of the IED saved Iraqi civilians and Coalition forces from sustaining casualties.

Car bomber stopped by Iraqi Army

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Iraqi army troops stopped a car speeding toward their checkpoint Jan. 27 in western Baghdad with small arms fire, wounding the driver. After looking into the vehicle, an explosive ordnance team was called.

The car was loaded with artillery rounds and several switches.

A Task Force Baghdad EOD team found 12 artillery rounds of various calibers and three plunger switches.

The driver of the vehicle was evacuated for medical treatment and remains in custody for further questioning.

Police commandos kill and capture insurgent forces

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Ministry of Interior Iraqi police commandos in the last 48 hours captured and killed 27 anti-Iraqi forces in Ramadi. The commandos also confiscated six rocket propelled grenades and 23 various types of machine guns.

Iraqi security forces continue to conduct operations against insurgent forces in cooperation with multinational forces.

Iraqi Air Force provides watchful eyes for elections

Story and photos by U.S. Air Force

Tech. Sgt. Andrew HUGHAN MNSTC-I Public Affairs

BAGHDAD, Iraq - The Iraqi air force is expanding both its missions and capabilities. The U.S. Air Force gifted three C-130 Hercules aircraft and recently the United Arab Emirates donated seven small utility aircraft being used for aerial photography, reconnaissance and light transport.

The number 3 squadron has seven Comp Air 7SL light aircraft at Kirkush Air Base to help Iraq's air force continue to build its operational capability. The Comp Air 7SL, built by Aerocomp Inc., is a light turbo-prop aircraft that has six seats and a sensor suite enabling it to have a reconnaissance capability, although current intentions see them being used in a utility role.

Currently the squadron's primary mission is recognition aerial photography of infrastructure, monitoring pipelines, electrical stations, buildings and repairs underway around Iraq for insurgent or terrorist activity. However, the squadron will also have a critical role in security during the upcoming election.

"Their job for the elections is to fly over the polling stations looking for anything suspicious, and look for anyone who does not belong there," said Wing Commander Rad Greene, aviation liaison with Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq.

The aircraft can cruise for hours above potential trouble spots and using reconnaissance capability identify problems and report it to officials on the ground.

Currently two Iraqi air force pilots are mission ready along with six maintenance personnel. Comp Air continuation training will be based out of Kirkush until new facilities are completed at Baghdad International Airport at the end of January 2005.

"We have the ability to fly over our assigned areas and complete our missions now," said Iraqi air force Maj. Ali Mohammed Salim, the squadron executive officer.

Maj. Salim also said the squadron would be completely mission ready in about three months.

MNSTC-I officials says it's still early in the process of getting the squadron up and going, but the Iraqi pilots and leadership are moving quickly toward standing on their own and performing any mission asked of them.

"We have moved most of the squadron from Basrah to Kirkuk, we have qualified pilots and have flown three ship formations," said U.S. Navy Lt. Dan Ramey, a pilot and MNSTC-I adviser here. "We are well on our way."

The squadron flies two to three training missions a day, each about two hours long, and training flights will increase as more pilots become qualified.

"We are looking to ensure we get the right aircraft, the right caliber of people doing the right job at the right time," Greene said.

Eventually, the Comp Airs will comprise the Iraqi Air Force's number 3 Squadron, which will operate in a utility, light transport role from 'New Al Muthana' - the West BIAP Air Base currently being refurbished.



Iraqi air force Comp Air 7SL light aircraft are flying ISTAR (Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance) missions over Iraq and will be aiding security efforts on election day.

Iraqi troops protect voters for historic elections

By U.S. Army Spc. Brian Schroeder
10th Mountain Division Public Affairs

BAGHDAD, Iraq – The Iraqi army and police force have a big job ahead of them. They are the glue in the democracy model. Their responsibility is to guarantee citizens are able to safely cast their vote for the new Iraqi National Assembly, a group of representatives who will elect a leader of Iraq at the end of this year.

With less than a week to go before the election, soldiers of the Iraqi army's 303rd Battalion patrol the streets of Al Ameryiah in a flatbed truck filled with 12 soldiers; one mans a pedestal-mounted machinegun on top of the truck and the other 11 carefully watch from the back of the truck for insurgents.

They are protected by flak vests, Kevlar helmets and black ski masks to conceal their identities from insurgents who could recognize them and possibly threaten or kill them or their families. None of their names are used in this report for security reasons.

The unsung heroes of Iraq, these soldiers and the Iraqi police, will act as the security force at each of the 1,405 polling stations in-and-around the Baghdad area. They have selflessly made the decision to put their lives in danger to protect their fellow Iraqi voters who want change and improvement in their lives.

Currently, the 303rd main concern is to ensure a safe place for Iraqis to vote at the 24 polling stations in their area of operation Jan. 30. They will be providing security in the streets surrounding the polling stations, as well as the polling stations itself.

The battalion's plans officer previously served in the Iraqi army for 20 years. He said that holding the elections is the first step toward a peaceful future for his four children and an end to the insurgency in Iraq.

"The election will be a strange and unique situation because we have never had an election before," he said. "This is the first election by the Iraqi people for a leader who will work for the Iraqi people. I hope the new government will be a true government. If it is true, they will help protect the Iraqi people from insurgents."

These Iraqi troops not only fight insurgents with weapons, they also encounter the terrorists who choose to attack the Iraqi people with words. At three of the polling stations in Al Ameryiah, threats and warnings against voting at these particular polling stations have been spray painted on the walls. Some read "Long live the resistance!" and "Down with the decision council!"

Others are more violent in nature, threatening jihad and beheadings for those who participate in the elections.

A female soldier in the 303rd said she is excited to have the opportunity to vote in the upcoming elections. She said her neighborhood polling station has received many threats, but that will not stop her from doing what she can to improve her country's future. She believes the main focus of the new president should be to work with

multinational forces to end the insurgency and unnecessary killing of Iraqi citizens.

"The new government may be good, depending on the character of the person chosen," she said. "The new president will provide a safe and secure area for all of Iraq. I hope he will aid the poor people and not distinguish between the different classes of people when aid is being given; equal treatment for all citizens in Iraq."

Another Iraqi army troop, a young 20-year-old with a perpetual smile on his face, joined the Iraqi National Guard last April. He said he will vote because he wants to be part of the decision-making process for his new government. He agreed that nobody should be treated differently because of the tribe they belong to, or their status in society.

"The new president should not discriminate against the people because they are not Sunni or they are not Shia," he said. "He will have to provide power and water to all citizens and make the laws (apply to) everybody."

The young soldier became the sole-provider for his wife, one-year-old child and two smaller brothers after his parents died. He joined the ING to protect his fellow Iraqis and his newly freed nation. His family asked him to leave, though, because a note was left on his front door stating he and his family would be beheaded if he continued to work with the Americans.

"I can't leave this job because it is a good job, and I am proud to be a soldier, alongside the other soldiers," he said. "It is an important thing to make people feel safe while they go to work. I am here to protect the Iraqi people."

Most of the soldiers of the 303rd were prior-service members, but wanted to remain in the military to help build a peaceful land for their people to live. One sergeant said protecting the people of Iraq and ensuring their safety was one reason he wanted to stay in the ING. He said he hopes the new government will bring humility to the country, so they can experience the taste of real freedom.

"Sure the insurgents will continue to attack after the elections, but the new government will build a stronger army and end the insurgency," he said. "Democracy is good for Iraq because it means we will be able to have a better life and to be able to see life the way it should be."

Despite the constant fears and threats voters and troops alike receive; the plans officer maintains an optimistic outlook for the elections. He said he is confident the elections will take place and they will bring a new leader to Iraq who will make Iraq a better place for its citizens.

"Our new president must see the Iraqi suffering; the suffering in everyday life, such as no water or electricity and the fuel lines. We hope the bad situation will change," the plans officer said. "I hope the time comes when I can wear my uniform in public without having to worry for my life, and the time when outsiders can come to our country and not be afraid of being kidnapped."

Training base will house up to 12,000 troops

By BJ Weiner

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region Southern District

TALLIL, Iraq - The new Iraqi army base in south central Iraq graduated its first police cadet training class Nov. 2004 due to the efforts of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, independent contractors and the recruits themselves.

Now a functional training facility for the Iraqi police, riot police and the Iraqi army, the base was originally slated to be a Republican Guard division post under Saddam's regime, according to Wes Watson, area engineer for the Corps' Gulf Region South District.

"The base was 85 percent complete, and then something happened; maybe the former regime ran out of money," Watson said. "The design was modular; Yugoslavian made. It's very nice construction, very durable. It stood abandoned probably until the summer of 2003. After we invaded and the Marine Corps left the area, it was looted to the bone."

Watson said that every roof tile, floor tile, every electrical system component, water pipes and drainage tiles were stolen, and that the only things surviving were the skeletal remains of the buildings.

"Our scope of work called for us to come in and renovate the facility," he said. "We started construction Feb. 17, 2004 and it is still ongoing. We are doing it in essentially four phases. To get water to the base, we pulled 17 kilometers of pipe from the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers into the base. We have constructed ranges and training firing ranges on the base, and we have used local labor. My guess is that, because the numbers fluctuate, we employ anywhere from 1,500 to 3,500 people at once."

The \$150 million project includes the headquarters, and the kitchen, laundry and warehouse facilities, and a mosque. Watson said the facility will be the "lynchpin of the new Iraqi army in the Shiite south. Once an Iraqi army is trained, that facility will become the headquarters for one of the southern divisions for the Army – depending on how many divisions they end up having."

An Iraqi military base is not like an American base, according to U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Jerome D. Caruthers, Air Force civil engineer and production control manager. The Iraqi base resembles a U.S. basic training facility such as Fort Jackson, S.C., or Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.

"This base has two different kinds of training," Caruthers said. "One side is CMATT – Coalition Military Assistance Training Team. The American military here, about 150 of them, assist with the Iraqi

army training. The other side, CPATT or Civilian Police Assistance Training Team, handles police personnel. Once completed, the base will be able to house up to 12,000 troops."

Caruthers explained that CPATT trains personnel in military police techniques and also has a special police forces operations training program, which includes a shoot house, a facility set up with targets and a place to practice close-quarter battles, a part of urban warfare. An Australian contractor works with the trainees, he said.

There are two types of infantry training at the base. The first type is the border patrol and the second is the infantry, or ground troops. These volunteers will see action upon their graduation from the training. Infantry movement techniques under direct fire, with the shoot-move-communicate strategy, and a basic training course are taught by Iraqi non-commissioned officers who went through a

special course to teach them how to train troops.

"American soldiers are acting as observers and taking notes, advising the NCOs on things to stress and different teaching strategies," said Caruthers. "We're adding an obstacle course to improve the training level."

When Caruthers arrived at the base three months ago, his purpose was to act as the facilities manager. Since he noted that some facilities were already under construction, he trained himself to be a quality assurance inspector by working with the Corps' field office and credits them for helping him develop his current position.

"I would go to the Corps' offices to see how I could help them," he said. "I would ask what problems they were having, and they'd take me out to all the job sites to meet the contractors. I started gathering information, with the help of Frank Kalisz and Joe Faustina, I got into a niche. So, when the base commander, Army Lt. Col. Mark Harvey, needed information, I could go to the appropriate source."

Soldiers have been at the base for six months, said Caruthers. In the beginning, the training was as rough as the construction, due to a system without checks and balances. However, things are going much more smoothly now.

"We started hiring local contractors," Caruthers said, "and, at first, they were using substandard materials – things that were available locally. Now, they inspect for quality before the materials are purchased and that has helped a great deal."

"We have also learned to write things into the contracts that we take for granted in the United States; we are adapting and things are running smoother," Caruthers said.



An Iraqi army trainee gets pointers on how to negotiate an obstacle during basic training at a refurbished training base in southern Iraq. Photo courtesy U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

2004 JAG Tax Tips

Tax Info on Sharepoint

A collection of useful tax information and other material taken from various Web sites is posted at the MNSTC-I sharepoint under the folder "Taxes FY2004" on the left hand side of the page.

Get forms and tax information from the IRS: www.irs.gov. For detailed guidance see IRS Publication 3, "Armed Forces Tax Guide," which is available at the MNSTC-I sharepoint.

Special Deadline Extensions

In general, the deadline for filing your taxes is extended through the period of service in the combat zone, plus 180 days after leaving the combat zone. This extension applies to the filing and paying of income taxes that would have been due April 15, 2005. During this 180-day extension period, assessment and collection deadlines will be extended and you will not be charged interest or penalties attributable to the extension period.

The deadline extension provisions apply not only to members serving in the U.S. Armed Forces (or individuals serving in support thereof) in the combat zone, but to their spouses as well, with two exceptions. First, if you are hospitalized in the United States as a result of injuries received while serving in a combat zone, the deadline extension provisions would not apply to your spouse. Second, the deadline extension provisions for your spouse do not apply for any tax year beginning more than two years after the date of the termination of the combat zone designation.

The deadline extension provisions apply to both spouses whether joint or separate returns are filed. If your spouse chooses to file a separate return, he or she will have the same extension of time to file and pay his or her taxes that you have. To take advantage of this extension, write "Combat Zone: Operation Iraqi Freedom" in red on your tax return when you file your taxes.

Refund?

You might not want to take advantage of this extension if you are entitled to a refund. Why let someone else have control over your tax money any longer than necessary? If possible, take the time to estimate your tax obligation and decide if you are going to use this extension or file now to get a refund if you are entitled to one.

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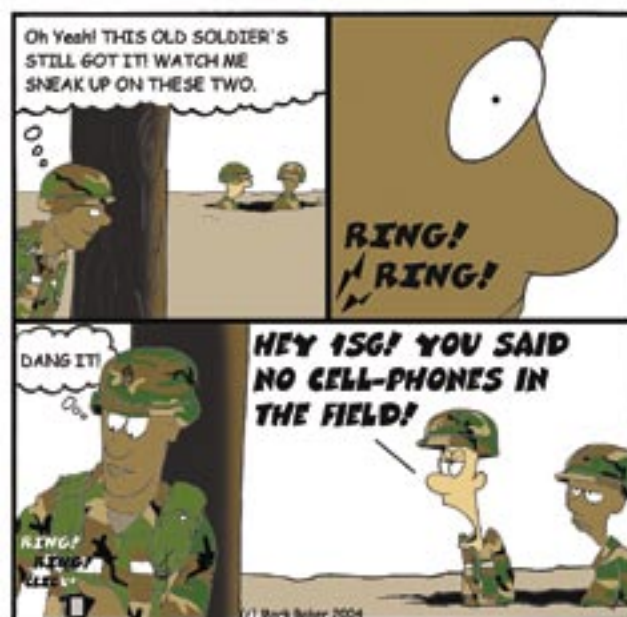
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MNSTC-I Equipment Update

The Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq issued the following equipment to the Iraqi security forces in the past week.

Ammunition	3,054,900 rounds
Body Armor	5,839
Uniforms	4,788
AK-47s	3,310
Helmets	1,213
Machine Guns	331
Pistols	320
Vehicles	90

Pvt. Murphy
By Master Sgt. Mark Baker



FINAL FRAMES



An Iraqi boy salutes a multinational convoy as it travels in Kirkuk. Photos by U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Andrew Hughan



Above: U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Eric Ball stands with NBC News anchor Brian Williams. Right: CBS News anchor Dan Rather, signs the U.S. Marine Corps flag of Chief Warrant Officer 4 Alex Childress. Both newsmen were at MNSTC-I for interviews with Lt. Gen. David H. Petraeus this week.